



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

December 15, 2004

News Release

HUMAN SMUGGLER SUSPECTED OF RAPING MIGRANT INDICTED AFTER YEAR-LONG MANHUNT

TUCSON - A year-long investigation by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents in Tucson and Fresno has led to the indictment of a Mexican national who allegedly raped an undocumented woman he smuggled into the United States in 2003.

A federal grand jury in Tucson returned a four-count indictment December 8 against Timoteo Santos Ramos, 28, an undocumented Mexican national. Santos is charged with several human smuggling violations, including transporting illegal aliens for profit, which carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000.

The joint investigation leading to the indictment was conducted by ICE and the Sheriff's Office in Madera County, California. The probe was launched when the alleged victim contacted the Sheriff's Office in August 2003 to file a sexual assault complaint.

The ensuing work by ICE agents and sheriff's detectives revealed that Santos was initially paid to smuggle the victim's brother into the U.S. through Arizona in March 2003. A month later, he was hired to bring in the victim herself.

Santos is alleged to have sexually assaulted the victim twice when he smuggled her into the U.S. near Sasabe, Arizona with a group of other undocumented aliens. The victim, who now lives in California, ultimately gave birth to a child as the result of the assault.

"This case again shows the complete disregard human smugglers have for the welfare of the migrants they're purporting to help," said Kent Johansson, deputy special agent-in-charge of ICE investigations in Tucson. "ICE will continue to work with its state and federal law enforcement partners to see that the criminals behind this reprehensible enterprise are punished to the fullest extent of the law."

ICE agents and sheriff's detectives eventually determined Santos had an extensive immigration and criminal history. He was arrested near Bakersfield, California November 9 by ICE agents out of Fresno.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security.